

THE CINEMATHEQUE

The regular Bay Area showcase for personal and avant-garde films.

'79 Shows on Thursdays and Sundays at 8:00 PM at the San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut St., S.F.

Donation \$2.

Free coffee.

For information call 586-8486.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1

First Films

At the Cinematheque it is a matter of course that we show the most recent works by filmmakers of high repute. However it is also interesting to take a look at the older and less well-known works. These films might be less crafted than many of the films made in film schools across the country. But in every case these films were made under very primitive conditions without benefit of modern equipment. Be that as it may they are energetic and true artistic statements made when there were very few places in this country for the viewing of such works. Our program will include the following:

AMPHETAMINE (1966) 10min. by Warren Sonbert - "A heart-stopping film...completely symptomatic of the film-making revolution." - James Stoller, "Art Voices"
INGREEN (1964) 13min. by Nathaniel Dorsky - "...made of beautiful greens...glimses of figures, of images that are recognizable...the esthetic experience is created by the flow and play of superimpositions." - Jonas Mekas
PLASTIC HAIRCUT (1963) 15min. by Robert Nelson - "One of the best films of 1963" - Ken Kellman, "Village Voice"
LITTLE STABS AT HAPPINESS (1963) 18min by Ken Jacobs, featuring Jack Smith
RAY GUN VIRUS (1966) 14min. by Paul Sharits

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

World Premiere of NORTH BEACH

HENRY HILLS IN PERSON

"Certainly among the most energetic of the serious young film artists to emerge in the seventies, Henry Hills is essentially a lyricist who takes the very personal images of his living and with a great deal of struggle transforms them into works of enduring simplicity. Appropriately, the solutions he discovered in earlier works are not applicable to recent films. Each film therefore becomes a record of different aesthetic and technical concerns as well as a demonstration of the artist's sincerity. One aspect which rings true in these films is that Hills has a strong inner voice which one sees as aiming toward mature and perhaps monumental works to come." - C. V.

Among the films on this program is the PORTER SPRINGS cycle, each part of which was filmed on a separate yearly visit to the Hills' family summer home in a Georgia farm community. Our program will also feature the world premiere of NORTH BEACH, begun when Hills was a resident here. This evening's program will include the following:

BALIEIRE
GEORGE (1978) 3min. - a portrait of George Kuchar
JOEL (1977) 6min.
PORTER SPRINGS parts 1-3 (1976-78)
NORTH BEACH (1979) - to be shown in two different versions.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Stan Brakhage: Recent Short Films

Now entering his middle-age Brakhage continues to break new ground. A few years ago he began making films in Super-8 a medium he liked for its lightweight equipment, thus greater ease in collecting images. However, labs aren't equipped for turning out consistently high quality prints therefore Brakhage has elected to blow-up to 16mm, a process he has found more to his liking. Most of the films on this program were made in this manner. This evening's program will include:

BIRD (1978) 9min. - "This is the first clear vision I've had of the hot-blooded dinosaurs still living among us." S.B.
THOT-FAL'N (1978) - "This film describes a psychological state 'kin to 'moon-struck', its images emblems (not quite symbols) of suspension-of-self within consciousness and then that feeling of 'falling away from conscious thought.'" S.B.
THE DOMAIN OF THE MOMENT (1977) 18min.
BURIAL PATH (1978) 15min. - "The film begins with the image of a dead bird. The mind moves to forget, as well as to remember: this film, in the tradition of THOT FAL'N, graphs the process of forgetfulness against all oddities of remembered bird-shape." S.B.
SLUICE (1978) 6min. - "It is a wooden silver-retrieving sluice, thus light-catch awash with something like 'cheek and jowl clippings of Argentine Bulls' (as Hollis Frampton reminds us) and many chemical residues of earth. My mind has grown TREE out of the forest of all of it"
CENTRE (1978) "A series of narrative events, stories if you like, but so clustered visually as to have a center, so to speak, slightly off centre." - S.B.
PURITY AND AFTER (1978)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Kessler, Burckhardt, Palazzolo

CITY VISIONS

This coast-to-coast hook up features three films by three filmmakers in three different cities and their particular visions and/or attitudes, desires and ecstasies about these places. This evening's program is as follows:

COLUMBARIUM (1978) 20min. by Chester Kessler - "is a cinematic portrait of what is perhaps San Francisco's most neglected landmark, a small domed building used for the storage of ashes of the dead. By association the film becomes a crisp, subtle meditation on death. Beautifully photographed the film brings to life the cold stones in slow measures of light and shadow which in their variations create a rich counterpoint the music on the soundtrack."
MARQUETTE PARK (1977) 25min. by Tom Palazzolo - "is a steamroller of raw 'cinema verite', an unsettling look at the reaction of white residents to a black march into their neighborhood, and the role played in generating hostility by local Nazi organizers. Palazzolo, a veteran Chicago filmmaker and Mark Rance, a student at MIT, have shot the events of a single afternoon from behind the 'white lines' in a straight and even-handed looking fashion, without a trace of moralizing or manipulation." Ron Epple
CITY PASTURE (1975) 38min. by Rudy Burckhardt - A snow storm-- Disney World--self important New York--ox pull in Maine--a special old man--strip tease--an ant in the woods--wild 14th street--a mugging survived-- the end.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

The Super-8 Films of Gene Barresi

CINEMATIC NEURO-TRANSMISSIONS

Gene Barresi is a leading figure in the current Super-8 revolution which is going on across the country. Gene's films have a consistency and intelligence which certainly place him among the best of the younger filmmakers today. This evening's program is as follows:

THREE SHORT SKETCHES (1977) 9 min. - "My sketches are short films shot spontaneously for the duration of a fifty foot roll, and are usually concerned with whatever happens to meet my eye."
DIAMORPHOSES (1974) 6min. - "An abstract film poetically depicting the relationship between the camera diaphragm and the imagery which is generated when the diaphragm is obstructed. This film has always given me the sensation of primeval metamorphoses, and is perhaps metaphoric of that process."

THE PERSONIFICATION OF LIGHT (1975) 9min. -A film in three parts and a continuation of the experimentation which led to DIAMORPHOSIS.

LITTLE HOUSE (1976) 5min. - "A short film shot during a three month period in Yellow Springs, Ohio. My object was to record the elusive imagery which normally escapes one because it is an ambient part of the overall Gestalt which comprises what is usually seen."

LEICAFLEX (1977) 4 min. - "Among other things the idea was to use the motion picture camera, which records the field of vision at 24 f/p/s to capture imagery exceeding that speed, i.e., the imagery was presented to the camera at 1/500 sec, 1/1000 sec., etc."

REFLECTIONS IN THE INFINITY GLASS (1977) 9min. - "A document of an experience during which I recorded a great deal of imagery reflected in various optical devices."

TV MOVIE parts I, II and III (1978) 18 min. - "A tribute to the giant tele-screens of 1984, six years early, metaphoric of that process whereby we are conditioned to want the best deodorants and the toothpaste which gives us the whitest teeth."

GHOSTS (in progress) 8min. - "Shot in Haight Ashbury, this film attempts to convey the idea that we 'are food for the moon'. Spatial and temporal planes intersect without cinematic manipulation, implying THAT EVERYTHING IS A MOVIE."

STRESS (1978) 7min. - "Shot on the occasion of Mick Jagger's 34th birthday, this film, often shot from the hip, depicts audience reactions at the recent Rolling Stones Oakland concert."

SIDEWALK SERIES (1978) 30min. - "This series includes FILMMAKER FOLLOWING HIS SHADOW OR SNAKE BITING ITS TAIL, which is a short film I shot under the influence of psilocybin; LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT, a film in which I randomly inspect the sidewalk trash reflective of the society which discarded it; and NEWS, a film inspired by a William Carlos Williams poem." (notes by the filmmaker)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16

OPEN SCREENING

Bring Your Own

All 16mm and Super 8 films welcomed.
Films must be presented at the door of the projection booth before 8:00.
Admission to this event is one dollar or one film.

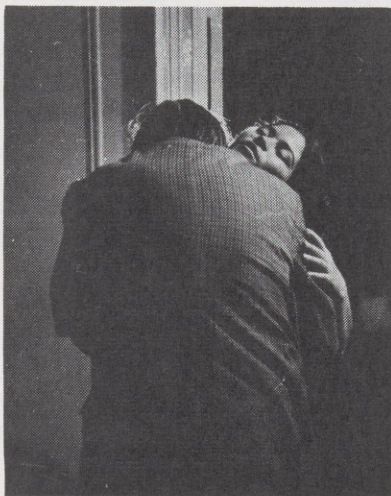
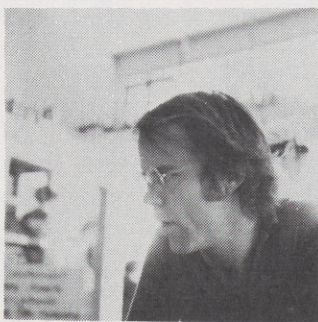
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Dutch Films

DANIEL SINGELENBERG IN PERSON

Last month's scheduled appearance was postponed due to illness. Daniel Singelenberg resumes his tour of the United States, we wish him the best of health. Our program will include:

ANOTHER SHOT (1973) 5min. -A self portrait.
DANCING BOY (1976) 15 min. - The Japanese dancer SHUSAKU.
DRINKING ALCOHOL (1976) 5 min. - Five hours of real time covered by five minutes of film time. A person changing.
CHRISTMAS (1977) 3min. An angel on a music box found in a flea market.
VARIOUS PORTRAITS (1977) 3min. including: John Giorno, Joe Dallesandro, Stefania Cassini, William Moritz.
LOVER (1978) 3min. A portrait of Tom Chomont.
EEN BEETJE GEK / A BIT STRANGE (1978) 25min. - A portrait of the popular Dutch author, Simon Carmiggelt.



from the Kuchar's BORN OF THE WIND

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Sharits, Brand, Rimmer

This is a program of films which seem to go together because each one uses the medium of film in specific the different ways.

MOMENT (1972) 25min. by Bill Brand - is 'a demonstration-exploration of the line between human information and machine information: a dynamic revelation of film's basic unit, the frame.' Formally, it consists of seven permutations of a two-and-a-half-minute shot, each of which renders the natural image increasingly incoherent until, finally, coherence is miraculously restored. What we have actually witnessed is the progressive decomposition of the original material down to its ultimate constituent as information, by means of reversing its 'direction' in decreasing lengths; so that the final restoration is, in fact, the opening shot running backwards frame by frame."

-Ian Christie, "Studio International"

COLOR SOUND FRAMES (1974) 27min. by Paul Sharits - "It is a film in which Sharits sums up his researches in the area of film strip (in opposition to the individual frames). The film strips move horizontally and vertically; two strips move simultaneously in opposite directions; variations in color; action of sprocket-holes. Very methodically and scientifically he covers the area, presents the results of his findings, covers all relevant possibilities...COLOR SOUND FRAMES advances one area of cinema or one area of researches in cinema (call it art if you wish) to a new climax, to a new peak: his exploration is so total, so perfect." Jonas Mekas, "Village Voice"

MIGRATION (1969) 12 min. by David Rimmer - "...made full use of rear screen projection rephotography, stop-framing, multiple-framing and slow motion. The migration of the title is interpreted as the flight of a ghost bird through aeons of space/time, through the micro-macro universe, through a myriad of complex realities...Successive movements of the film develop rhythmic, organic counterpoints in which cosmic transformations send jelly fish into the sky and ocean waves into the sun. It concludes with stop-frame slow-motion of the bird, transformed once again into flesh." Gene Youngblood

SURFACING ON THE THAMES (1970) 8min. by David Rimmer - "is the ultimate metaphysical movie, the ultimate post-minimal movie, one of the really great constructivist films since WAVELENGTH as a statement on the illusionistic nature of cinematic motion." - Gene Youngblood "Arts Canada"



Steve Dwoskin's SILENT CRY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

The Kuchur Brothers—8mm Films

GEORGE & MICHAEL KUCHAR IN PERSON

Rarely screened but still among the best vintage Kuchar are their 8mm films made in the late fifties and early sixties. These films show a great deal of sophistication and were instrumental in encouraging the use of 8mm as a medium of self expression.

"The imagination gone wild in the Bronx. Gorgeous color and the most voluptuous and glorious cast you have ever seen. Doice Vita in the Bronx. Eight mm. cinema has arrived." - Jonas Mekas

"My brother, Mike and I have been making 8mm films since the age of thirteen when we filmed the spectacular saga of the wet destruction of the Atlantic Empire. It featured a cast of three with elaborate costuming that we borrowed from the living room windows, plus the added realism of having been filmed on location in Bronx Park. For all of its five minute running time, it was a rousing success and spurred us on to create more celluloids. This led to the filming of A TUB NAMED DESIRE, a story of naked vengeance in white porcelain. On the same theme of naked passions we filmed I WAS A TEENAGE RUMPOT and PUSSY ON A HOT TIN ROOF."

-George Kuchar

This program of 8mm sound films will feature:
I WAS A TEENAGE RUMPOT (1957) 10min.
BORN OF THE WIND (1960) 25min.
LUST FOR ECSTASY (1961) 45min.
ANITA NEEDS ME (1961) 10min.

THURSDAY, MARCH 1

Murphy, Lawder, Dore O.

MOVIE STILLS (1977) 45min. by J.J. Murphy- "is made from 16 stills taken from a movie, printed before your eyes and sequenced into a frail narrative...Three characters-a woman and two men- are introduced and established in a convivial relationship... As with the emergence of a photograph from its developer, each image here comes slowly out of whiteness, its blacks rising from greys and just passing the corner of a proper chiaroscuro." -

-Anthony Bannon, "Buffalo Evening News"

DANGLING PARTICIPLE 18min. by Standish Lawder - Made entirely from classroom instructional films, DANGLING PARTICIPLE offers a wealth of practical advice on contemporary sexual hang-ups and where they come from. "The funniest underground film I've ever seen." -Sheldon Renan

BLONDE BARBAREI (1972) 25min. - "Dore O. returns in a work less synthetic than antithetical to her work on confinement and opening...on a screen divided in two each half of the image, a play of reflections and of su superimpressions, seems to take the other for its echo." Helmuth Fenster

SUNDAY, MARCH 4

Jon Jost's LAST CHANTS FOR A SLOW DANCE

"Jon Jost is an independent among American independent filmmakers. Working outside both the Brakhage tradition and that of structural film, Jost has almost single-handedly soldiered the Marxist caucus of the New American Cinema. He began making films in 1963, though his career was interrupted between '65-67 when he was imprisoned for draft evasion. In 1968 he helped found the political film collective, Newsreel, but the intolerance of the New Left to his non-narrative experimental style alienated him."

His recent films, however are decidedly in the narrative vein. "In LAST CHANTS FOR A SLOW DANCE (DEAD END), Jost continues in the narrative vein. This time his genre is the road film...Jost gives this often romantic genre a distinctly political orientation. His anti-hero, Tom Bates, is on the road because he is unemployed. The endless black-top and the aimless driving stand for the condition of the "lumpenproletariat" the debris of the economy, wandering hour by hour without the direction and structure of the work world."

"Bates is an unsavory character, not the victim with the heart of gold we're accustomed to. He is mean, sexist, selfish and irresponsible. Jost describes him as a cowboy macho type, a brash individualist who doesn't owe anyone anything...Jost's point is that Bates' individualism or rather selfishness is a dead end, a self-contradictory, destructive trap for the disenfranchised."

"The story is episodic. Incident follows incident-- this is more a chronicle than a narrative. It verges on pure chronology since dramatic necessity is rarely the link between scenes..."

"Jost's images are often brilliant. The opening shot is a close-up of the highway from a moving car, literalizing the major character's complaint that things go by too quickly to be comprehended. Jost also interrelates a scene of driving at night and one in a bar, by stressing each in terms of color and glints of light exploding out of a field of darkness. The compositional similarity makes a thematic point; both places exist in a vagrant, fugitive time." Noel Carroll, "Soho Weekly News"

THURSDAY, MARCH 8

The Films of Vincent Grenier

VINCENT GRENIER IN PERSON

Vincent Grenier is a Quebecois filmmaker presently living in New York City who made his earliest films here in San Francisco. In his films, a painterly sensibility is fused with an almost musical sense of form. Grenier's studies of fluid light patterns, which suggest reality without actually representing it, prompted Jonas Mekas to write in the "Soho Weekly News": "the time, the preoccupation, the pace, the images uncompromisingly follow Grenier's secret aesthetic drives... there is a seriousness, consistency and persistency about his work that is more than impressive..." Our program will include the following:

WINDOW WIND CHIMES PART ONE (1974) 20 min. - a domestic drama starring Ann Knutson, Vincent Grenier and George Kuchar, "combines the best elements of straight documentary with a very personal and poetic vision." Bob Cowan "Take One"

WORLD IN FOCUS (1976) 20 min. - "...Grenier animates the screen by thumbing through the candy-colored pages of a world atlas, at varying speeds and angles... An homage to the primitive cinema of the flip-book, and the ultimate armchair travelogue, WORLD IN FOCUS was a deserved prize-winner at this year's Ann Arbor Film Festival, and is a beautiful idea beautifully conceived." J. Hoberman "Soho News"

WHILE REVOLVED (1976) 12min. - "is so rarefied that the image that the image seems barely there. Smoky forms appear to float out in front of the screen, later converting it to an undulating field of muted colors." J. Hoberman, "Soho Weekly News"

X (1976) 9min. - "Precise triangles of light spread across the frame to create shifting planes that can be read as either deep or shallow space."

INTERIEUR INTERIORS (TO A.K.) (1978) 15min. - "...defines its sense of space through meticulously controlled shadows. But unlike X or WHILE REVOLVED, it presents the viewer with the possibility of knowing the profile of origin of the image (what actually takes place in front of the camera). Here the screen is trisected by two parallel, vertical lines. The filmmaker match-cuts near identical compositions so that during the film's 16 minutes, the lines are successively revealed to be a door, a corner, a piece of string..." J. Hoberman "Soho News"

FRIDAY, MARCH 9

OPEN SCREENING

Bring Your Own

All 16mm and super 8 films welcomed.
No films accepted for screening after 8:00.
Admission: one dollar or one film.

SUNDAY, MARCH 11

Steve Dwoskin's SILENT CRY

STEVEN DWOSKIN IN PERSON

Steve Dwoskin, who is currently Artist-in-residence at San Francisco State University is also currently on the faculty of the San Francisco Art Institute. A native New Yorker where he distinguished himself as a graphic artist as well as a filmmaker, he moved to London in 1964 where he became a lecturer in film and television at the Royal College of Art. His cinema, intense, sensuous, and demanding, eschews conventional narrative. Over the past fifteen years, Dwoskin has created a consistent and rich body of work that has earned him an international reputation among the avant garde, equal to that of Fassbinder, Herzog and Wenders. "Almost all of my films find a hard way into words. The film medium is an expressive form. I work in the moving picture. They are not direct story narrative films but allow others to introduce their own narratives, as it were. The films have been labelled in many ways...they have caused tears and sympathy. Also anger and violence. I am concerned with the film experience: the subjective expression and the film and filmed material. I follow my instinct in the process of making the films and my feelings...whichever way you go, the films themselves are their own realities..." S.D.

THE SILENT CRY (1977) 96min. - "...made in English with German and French television, is a kind of impressionistic 'diary of a girl whose silent cry for help/understanding/love/identity is the underlying theme of the narrative. Dwoskin's work appears to be growing in openness and accessibility and though THE SILENT CRY is hardly an easy film for general audiences, it is certainly not difficult to comprehend. The girl, an artist married to a set designer, is shown in the routine of her daily life constantly being told what to do (or what she has done wrong) by her husband or father while her own ideas about herself emerge only in negative action or in fantasy projections. Not everything is seen from her viewpoint but everything is felt as she feels it. What Dwoskin calls an 'under narrative' develops and interweaves through the film giving a composite of dreams, distortions, diaries, memories and feelings. Though some of these scenes are difficult to explain separately, they soon become part of an overall visual tapestry that gives a sense of her dilemma. Dwoskin has likened the film to a kind of contemporary ALICE IN WONDERLAND, 'a world which we can feel more and more as the filmic tapestry is woven.' It is also, one should emphasize, beautifully photographed with not only highly effective extreme close-ups but also many finely-patterned almost abstract shots." Ken Wlaschin

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